

Application No. 10/771,441
Amendment dated April 24, 2006
Reply to Office Action of November 22, 2005

The claims are amended as follows:

1. (currently amended) A composite file folder comprising a front panel, a back panel and a labeling tab along one edge of said back panel with said back panel and front panel being integral along one edge with a fold axis between said panels, said folder having a paper substrate support layer with a reinforcing film adhered to exterior surfaces of said front and back panels across said fold axis and applied ~~either~~ to each side of labeling tab, said reinforcing film being a multi-layer breathable film having a matte finish outer surface consisting of a cellulosic base material with an underlying adhesive layer adhered to said ~~folder paper substrate support layer~~, said reinforcing film covering at least 50% of an outside surface of said file folder and allowing moisture exchange from said paper substrate support layer through said reinforcing film.

2. (original) A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said reinforcing film has printed indicia on the matte finish outer surface.

3. (original) A composite file folder as claimed in claim 2 wherein said printed indicia is strongly bonded or adhered to said matte finish outer surface.

4. (currently amended) A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said reinforcing film is clear and said paper substrate support ~~stack~~ layer includes printing on the surface thereof visible through said reinforcing film.

5. (currently amended) A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said reinforcing film covers at least 75% of the outside surface of said ~~file folder~~ paper substrate support layer.

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6. (canceled)

7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said paper ~~stock~~ substrate support layer has a thickness in the range of 10 to 16 thousandths of an inch and said reinforcing film has a thickness of less than .6 mils.

9. (original) A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said reinforcing film is secured to generally cover both the inside and outside surfaces of said front panel and said back panel.

10. (canceled)

11. (withdrawn) A method of manufacturing file folders comprising moving an elongate paper substrate past a laminating station, providing at said laminating station a reinforcing film having a matte finish recording surface and an underlying thermal adhesive layer, heating said reinforcing film to activate said thermal adhesive layer, aligning said reinforcing film such that at least one edge of said film overlies one edge of said paper substrate, securing said multi-layer reinforcing film to said paper substrate such that said reinforcing generally extends across at least 50% of the width of said paper substrate, said reinforcing film being secured to said paper substrate by applying pressure to said recording surface forcing said thermal adhesive layer into intimate contact with said paper substrate, folding and adhering said paper substrate to form a reinforced edge with said matte finish recording surface located about said reinforced edge, die cutting said reinforced edge to form a series of labeling tabs, cutting said substrate across the width thereof to

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form discrete file folders, and folding said discrete file folders about a hinge line to form front and back panels with said labeling tabs on side edges of said back panels and said reinforcing film to the exterior of said panels and across said hinge line.

12. (withdrawn) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein said reinforcing film is slightly less than the width of said paper substrate and said reinforcing film is maintained in alignment with said paper substrate to be within the width thereof.

13. (withdrawn) A method as claimed in claim 12 wherein said method includes printing on said paper prior to said laminating station indicia or markings intended to assist in use of the file folder and wherein said reinforcing film is generally transparent and applied over said indicia or markings.

14. (withdrawn) A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein said method includes printing on said reinforcing film after application of the reinforcing film to said paper substrate.

15. (withdrawn) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein said recording surface of said reinforcing film is of a cellulose base material.

16. (withdrawn) A method as claimed in claim 11 for manufacturing file folders of different colours comprising maintaining a series of reinforcing films of different colours, selecting the coloured reinforcing film to be applied and thereafter applying said reinforcing film.

17. (canceled)

18. (canceled)

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19. (canceled)

20. (canceled)

21. (canceled)

22. (canceled)

23. (canceled)

24. (canceled)

25. (canceled)

26. (canceled)

27. (canceled)

28. (canceled)

29. (canceled)

30. (canceled)

31. (currently amended) A recyclable file folder comprising a paper stock substrate folded to form a front panel, a back panel and a labeling tab along one edge of said back panel, said file folder further including a cellulosus based reinforcing film adhered to both a front and rear side of said labeling tab and extending over at least a border region on an exterior surface of said back panel, said reinforcing film being a breathable layer allowing moisture exchange therethrough.

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32. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 31 wherein said cellulos based reinforcing film is adhered to said paper substrate by a water based adhesive.

33. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 31 or 32 wherein said reinforcing film has a matte exterior finish.

34. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 33 including a series of discrete labels adhered to said labeling tab, each discrete label including an outer cellulos based film layer.

35. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 34 wherein each discrete label includes water based adhesive layer securing the label to the reinforcing film.

36. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 31 wherein said reinforcing film has an exterior textured surface providing improved adhesion with water based adhesives and improved adhesion with cooperating inks.

37. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 36 wherein said reinforcing film extends over and generally covers the exterior surfaces of said front and back panels.

38. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 37 wherein said reinforcing film includes printed indicia on the surface of the reinforcing film for assisting a user in manually recording information on said reinforcing film.

39. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 38 wherein reinforcing film provides an erasable surface for conventional ink and pencil markings.

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40. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 31 wherein said reinforcing film covers exterior surfaces of said front and back panels of said file folder.

41. (original) A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 40 wherein said reinforcing film has an exterior matte finish and provides a receptor surface for receiving adhesive labels thereon and a manual recording surface for receiving ink or pencil markings while allowing manual erasing thereof.